

THOMAS KOONTZ • ARCHITECT, PC

Architecture • Interior Design • Project Development

October 5, 2006

Blacksburg Town Council
C/O Ms. Adele Schirmer
Director Planning and Engineering
Town of Blacksburg
500 South Main Street
Blacksburg, VA 24060

Dear Members of Blacksburg's Town Council:

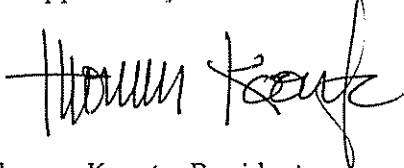
The Lester Group, owner of the Town Center, is seeking to install a fire escape on the south side of the Town Center with Town Council's approval. The purpose of the fire escape is to provide for a second exit from a space on the second floor of the building that had previously been a boiler room. The second exit is required by the International Building Code. This request has been reviewed by the Historical Design and Review Board and Town staff.

There is one tenant on the second floor of the building. The fire escape permits completing the second floor of 6,000 square-feet. Because the building has been built to the property lines, the current tenant would have to be relocated and the building remodeled to add a second stairway. Although the fire escape will serve the new tenant now, it can serve the whole second floor if needed in the future.

The fire escape will be aluminum with a powder coated bronze finish. The bronze finish has been selected to compliment the existing bronze finished storefront on the building. The stairs will be mounted on the exterior face of the wall in the pedestrian alley; there will be no columns. I have attached a drawing showing the plan and elevation.

The fire escape is 24 inches wide and will have a landing at the point of egress from the second floor of the Town Center building. A small flight of stairs leads down to a gated landing. When the gate at the lower landing is opened it activates the counterbalanced stairs. Except in an emergency when the gate is operated the counterbalanced stairs remain in the up position keeping the pedestrian alley open. The stairs are high enough off the ground that people will not be able to access them from the ground. The stair is lowered in an emergency situation when the gate on the lower landing is opened. The stairs lower slowly because they are positively weighted.

We appreciate your consideration on our behalf,



Thomas Koontz, President
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